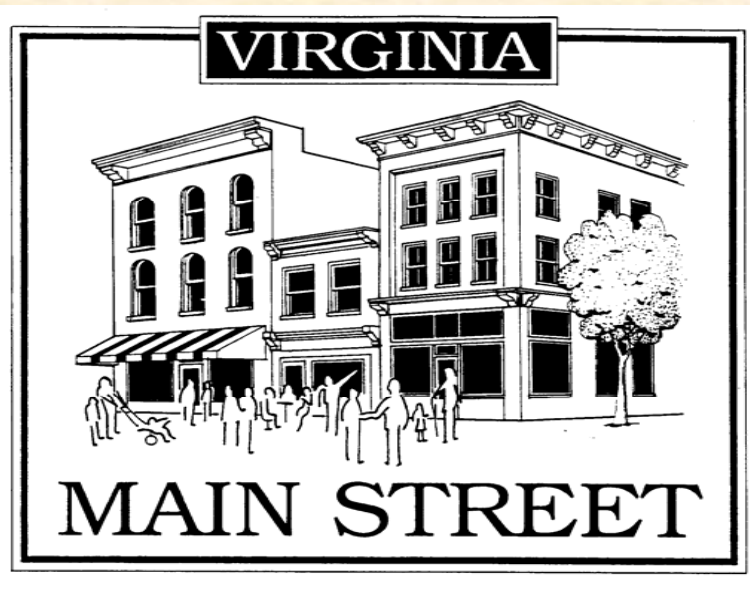


Virginia Main Street



Building Economic Vitality Downtown

America's Downtowns

The era of suburban sprawl
and urban removal





National Main Street

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Demonstration projects in late-'70s and early-'80s

1,834 active communities in 40+ state and citywide programs

\$18.3 billion of cumulative public and private investment (\$35.17 for each operating dollar)



Virginia Main Street

Department of Housing & Community Development

1985 – first 5 designated communities (5,000 and 50,000 pop.)

1988 & 1989 – five more each year

1992 – five more (3 small towns between 1,200 and 5,000 pop.)

1995 – four more

2000 – three more (up to 75,000 pop.)

2000 to 2004 – 49 Affiliates

2004 – three more

The Main Street Approach

"Economic development in the context of historic preservation"

Four Points

Eight Principles



The Four Points

- DESIGN
- PROMOTION
- ECONOMIC
RESTRUCTURING
- ORGANIZATION



Design

Improving the appearance of downtown's public and private spaces, including buildings, signs, business displays, parking and sidewalks.



Design

Typical activities:

- Inventory buildings and public spaces
- Create and promote building rehab incentives (historic district, tax abatement, design assistance, loans, grants, tax credits)
- Design/fund/construct public improvements
- Walking tours, education, etc.



Promotion

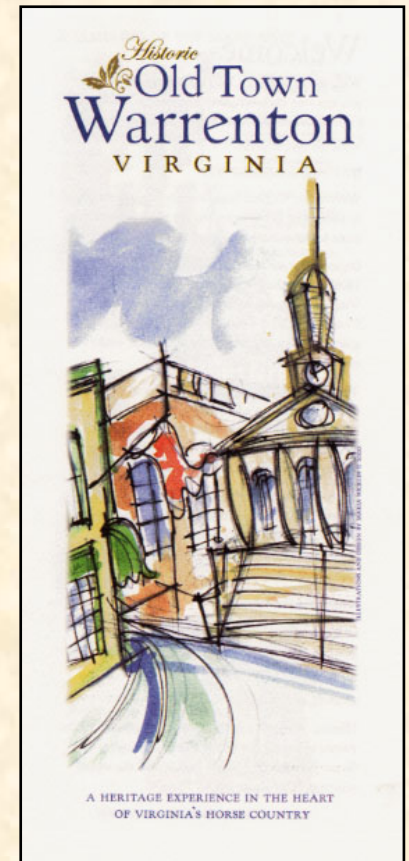
Marketing downtown's opportunities to investors, residents, customers and visitors through events, ads, publications and other activities.



Promotion

Typical activities:

- Inventory businesses and needs, sales patterns, customer base, ad ops, etc.
- Develop market position statements and strategies, target market segments
- Develop schedule of retail promotions, traffic-building festivals, image activities
- Develop marketing materials



Economic Restructuring

Strengthening and diversifying downtown's economic base, using market analysis and incentives as the foundation for recruitment and retention.





Economic Restructuring

Typical activities:

- Inventory existing buildings and businesses, and conduct market analysis
- Assess needs of existing businesses, design and implement retention/assistance programs
- Develop a business wish list, implement incentives and recruit new businesses

Organization

Building an effective coalition of public and private sector stakeholders, working in partnership with organizations who share an interest in the health of downtown and the community.



Organization

Typical activities:

- Officer and committee structure
- Set vision/mission/goals/priority activities
- Legal/financial/human management
- Membership development
- Fundraising
- Stakeholder and public education



Eight Principles

- Comprehensive
- Incremental
- Public-private partnerships
- Action-oriented
- Builds on existing assets
- Emphasizes quality
- Relies on changing attitudes
- Self-help



VMS Options

- Virginia Main Street Designated Communities
- DHCD Commercial District Affiliate Communities



Main Street Designation

- Competitively selected (next round 2007?)
- Under 75,000 ❖ critical mass
- Traditional district
- Look for strong organizational capacity
- Most commitment ❖ Most benefits
 - Design and other specialist assistance
 - Training
 - Marketing
 - Clearinghouse

Affiliate Communities

- **Services**

- Program Manager Training
- Regional Board Training
- Work Planning Assistance
- Telephone/Email Consultation
- Virginia Main Street Library

- **Requirements**

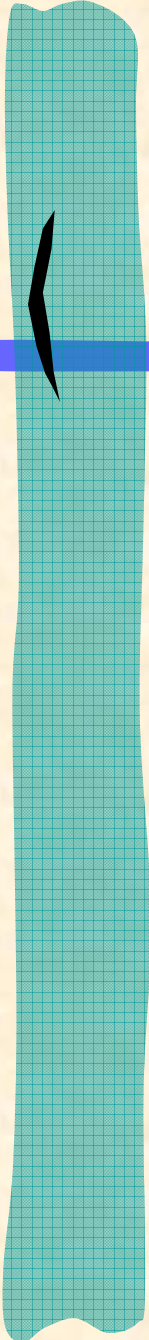
- Broad-based organization
- Comprehensive Main Street Approach™
- Active Participation



What works

- Aggressive management
- An independent organization of stakeholders
- Comprehensive incremental approach using all the Four (interrelated) Points





Virginia Main Street's Tally

- More than \$299 million of private investment since 1985
- more than 3,500 new, expanded or retained businesses and 9,650 new jobs
- more than 254,000 volunteer hours (valued at \$4.4 million) invested since 1997
- over 4,500 building projects

Contacts . . .

Virginia Main Street (804) 371-7030

www.dhcd.virginia.gov/MainStreet

101 basic training & other topical trainings

National Main Street Center

(202) 588-6219 or www.mainstreet.org

Conference April 2-5, 2006 New Orleans, LA

Virginia Downtown Development Association

(540) 231-4375 or www.downtownvirginia.org

Fall Conference